

# iMovie 06 HD Basics

## Planning to use iMovie with students?

Teach the basics using a projector without students opening their computers. Instruct for a MAX of 15-20 min and then let them play with what they've learned for 15-20 min.

There are three key parts to learning iMovie:

1. importing
2. navigating the timeline
3. making edits

You can teach this in three separate lessons:

- #1: **BASICS**: gathering media, importing, timeline
- #2: **ADVANCED**: adding audio, transitions, effects
- #3: **EXPORTING**: sharing your movies

It's a good idea to have a vocabulary list of common words we use so that we are all using the same language eg. (import, edit, timeline, shelf, voice over, crop, play-head)

It is also good to have a poster created with deadlines for each phase of editing with all kids' projects listed. This way they can see if they are on track for completing their project. If kids fall into the DANGER ZONE, they are behind and have to catch up on their own time. In many ways, you are the producer, managing all of the student projects.

Here are helpful deadlines:

**Images/voice over/rough edit/final edit/transitions/export**

Always save movies into the **MOVIES** folder and if possible to an external drive.

The **SHELF** is where you store media elements. This is where you can still images and video clips after they are imported.

The **TIMELINE** is where you create your movie. It has two modes, which I refer to as **STORYBOARD** mode and **TIMELINE** mode.

Only after a story script has been approved should a student get anywhere near a computer!

While you can **IMPORT** images throughout the production phase, it's best to have as many as possible the first time you **IMPORT** anything. With still images, BIGGER is better. Make sure the photo is at least 640 x 480 pixels. Always shoot on "superfine" if you are going to use images in a movie. If you are gathering images from

Google or Flickr or Picassa, note the image size (it's listed below the image itself).

To **IMPORT** an image, go to the **FILE** menu, select **IMPORT** and find the file on your computer. Now, if students are collecting images from home, they are responsible for making sure the file is in JPEG format and they know how to get it into the computer. They can put the images on a USB drive at home and then bring them in and import them. They might also be able to save images to an email account from home and download them at school.

### **IMPORTANT SHORTCUTS:**

Shift Apple i: import

Apple z: undo

Apple k: crop

Apple s: save

You want to get comfortable using the shelf before you move to the timeline.

\*If you get your images from **iPhoto**, note how the Ken Burns effect is used. Play with how to use it. You DO NOT want to use the effect with every photo: use it to draw your eye to the part of the photo that is the most important. Also, make sure you unclick the effect at the end of editing the photo so that the same settings are not automatically set up for all photos that go into iMovie.

### **DRAG & DROP:**

There are two views on the **TIMELINE**: storyboard view (icon looks like a film frame) and timeline view (icon looks like a clock). You want to drag and drop your media into your timeline using the Storyboard view first. You build the sequence of your story, building your rough cut. It is much easier to move clips around the timeline using the storyboard mode. Once you have the rough cut of your movie, you should get it signed off with a teacher to say you are ready to edit.

The playhead (the line with the yellow arrow at the top) allows you to scroll through your movie. You can jump to anywhere in the movie using the playhead. You can zoom in and out so that you can manipulate every frame of the movie.

If you want to drag and drop more than one image/film clip into the timeline, shift click as you select the clips.

### **EDITING:**

Move to **TIMELINE** view of your timeline (icon is a clock) and get comfortable with reading time on the timeline. Import a few images to practice adding and subtracting the length of how long an image stays on the screen. Place the mouse cursor at end of

an image/video clip. Notice how the cursor changes from an arrow to an indicator that you can drag this clip either left to decrease the length or right to increase the length of time that it stays on the screen. Get comfortable editing images before trying video.

When editing video clips, we **NEVER WANT TO USE THE DELETE** button. We simply want to shorten and lengthen clips: **TRIMMING**. This way you can undo all of your changes and get back all of your footage.

We shorten and lengthen clips by dragging the beginning or end of the clip to the length we want (which is why reading the timeline **TIME** is so important). You can also select a segment of the clip you want to **CROP** and hit apple k.

Just to keep things in perspective, a professional editor spends about one hour per minute of a film.

**EVERY MINUTE** you want to **SAVE** your work. Teach students the short-cut of Apple-key+s. When you save, turn to the person next to you and ask if they have saved their work. You also may want a bell to signal when everyone should save.

**iMovie**, like most software, is not without its glitches. When you encounter a situation you can't fix. Save (if you can) or Force Quit (Option-Click on the iMovie icon on the Dock). Restart the computer.

You can also edit your work in the Preview Monitor. There are triangles that you can slide back and forth: the film between the triangles are kept. **DO NOT** hit delete. Hit apple (to the left of the spacebar) k (crop).

Now, you know about 80% of the program.

## **ADVANCED EDITING:**

Audio:

1. recording voiceovers
2. importing music

You can record a voiceover directly in **iMovie** by using the Record button.

There are two audio tracks to use in the timeline and they are interchangeable. You can also turn off any of the audio tracks on your timeline.

Remember that there are audio professionals who do this for a living---we're just getting started.

**LEVELS:** set your levels---look at the visual/bars and make sure that about bars are at about  $\frac{3}{4}$ . You want to stay in the green and not the red as the sound will become distorted. You can edit audio the same way you edit video. You can drag the levels down or up and if you click on the timeline to get a point, you can drag down/up to create fade in and fade out.

**IMPORTING MUSIC:** it's the same as video

If you are showing the volume levels in the timeline, then you can't edit. You must go to the file menu and "HIDE VOLUME LEVELS."

If you goof something up, you can always go back to the original clip:  
Under the file menu, go to ADVANCED, and then REVERT TO ORIGINAL. This only works if you have TRIMMED your clips. If you DELETE them, all is lost. Period.

Before we move onto transitions, themes, and video fx, you want to have 90% of your media in your timeline. You also want your rough cut there: a sequence that makes sense to you. And, you want to have it signed off by a teacher before you move on.

Also keep in mind that you will probably watch your film an average of 25 times so you might be tired of it and you'll know it by heart (which may help if a computer gremlin takes your project!).

This is also a great time to have a focus group (of teachers, peers, other students, staff) watch your digital story and see how they respond: does it make sense? Do you get the response you want from them? Is the tone right?

## **TRANSITIONS:**

Only use them to enhance your message. LESS IS MORE. REALLY. You don't need most of them: think of all the films you have watched---do they use the swirl out? If so, how did it help with their story? Really think about why you are using them as they are often more distracting than enhancing. You'll most likely use the **Cross Dissolve** only. And Fade in/Fade out.

## **VIDEO FX:**

They may only be used to enhance your project. Same principle as with transitions.

## **THEMES:**

Teach this at the very very end. You use THEMES for your opening and closing credits. They look spectacular but are quite distracting if you aren't finished with everything else.

## EXPORTING:

Exporting = **compressing** your iMovie project to a self-contained file, which means when you click on it, the iMovie program doesn't launch. This also means you are reducing the size of your project file. Your iMovie project will look best when you play it within iMovie, but it's a large file so you'll want to export your movie in a format that can be either burned to a CD or uploaded to the web. If you have the space on an external drive or your hard drive, export a Full DV version. This can then be used to make a DVD compilation of student projects.

Most often, you'll export a CD-ROM quality version. This is a smaller file and can be kept on the laptop for showing friends. It is also the version that we can use to upload to the web without losing a great deal of quality. There are many discussions about what are the best settings for exporting an iMovie to be uploaded to YouTube. Really, CD quality is fine for most situations.